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Volume 37 | Number 8

Article 3

1957

As Wife and Mother

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Recommended Citation

Ferguson, Bess (1957) "As Wife and Mother," *The Iowa Homemaker*: Vol. 37 : No. 8 , Article 3.

Available at: <http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol37/iss8/3>

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The Role of Woman

As Wife and Mother

Today, just as yesterday, all over the world, from jungle huts to mansions on the boulevard, mothers are dreaming, planning and scheming for their men and children.

Two-year-old Marnie Johnson is already learning woman's work. She likes to be in the kitchen all the time.



by Bess Ferguson, '21

First Editor of the Iowa Homemaker

LONG, LONG ago Ruth said, "Whither thou goest, I will go. Thy people shall be my people."

This same spirit of family loyalty is expressed by today's young wives when they take an airplane to follow their husbands to the far corners of the earth. They establish homes wherever duty calls and with whatever they find at hand, just as yesterday they were setting forth in covered wagons to live in log cabins or sod houses.

Times have changed a good deal over the centuries and much of the detail of woman's work has changed too. But basically, a woman's dreams, her vision, her sense of responsibility to others have not changed. Today, as all through history, being of service to others has been the source of greatest satisfaction to women.

Down through the years, most women have married and raised a family. No longer do they spin and churn or oversee most of the processes that provide food and clothing. But families continue to thrive.

Men, since the beginning of the world, have needed and sought the companionship and help of women, be they

Richman, poorman, beggarman, thief,
Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief.

Each man looks for, and usually finds, a woman who is sympathetic and understanding, who believes in him and his work.

Woman's work, as a wife and mother, has followed much the same pattern down through the years. In Iowa, say 100 years ago, farm women made most of the clothing for their families, knitting their stockings and mittens, too. They prepared family meals from food produced on the farm, usually making and caring for the garden themselves. They kept accounts and worked very closely with their husbands to stretch incomes over their needs and as many of their desires as possible.

The latch string was always out and the revolving pedlar or the circuit rider knew he would be welcome

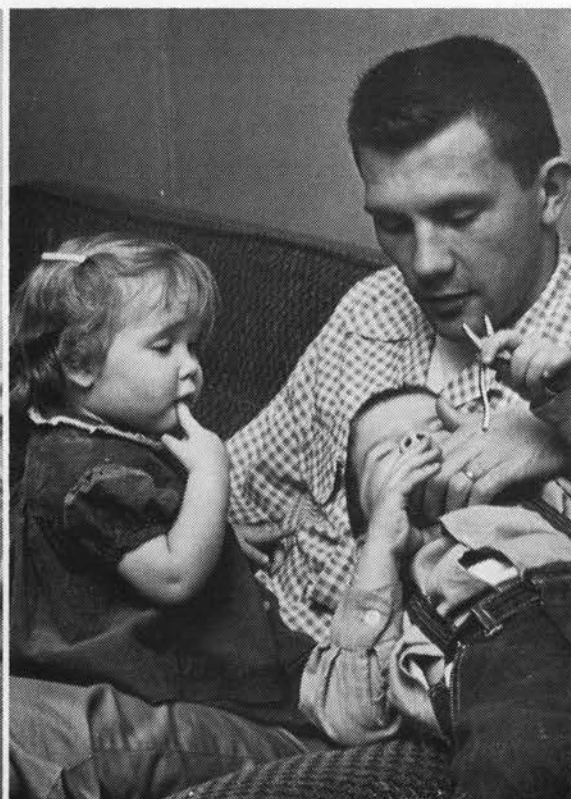
(Continued on Page 19)



Family life in Pammel Court may be crowded and hectic, but it's always wonderful, agree Mr. and Mrs. Don Johnson. Don is a junior ceramic engineer. He minds their two children, Donnie, 3, and Marnie, 2, while Mrs. Johnson

works as cashier at a movie theatre Saturday and Sunday afternoons. At home Mrs. Johnson reads bedtime stories, cooks, cleans and fulfills the duties common to wives and mothers everywhere.

Photographs by Bud Stickler



Woman's Role *(Continued from Page 7)*

at meal time. Strong and husky wives helped their husbands in the fields and with the chores. Many sold eggs, butter and garden produce in town.

Today's farm wife still keeps the farm and household accounts and follows the market reports. She keeps the meal hot when her husband is late or whips up more dinner for the extra men he has asked to stay. She may drive a tractor, help with the chores or bolster the family income by raising chickens or working part time in town.

One hundred years ago the town wife was the head of a production unit which provided the family with most of its food and clothing. She, too, was her husband's business partner, his ever ready hostess.

In those days many town families owned and cared for chickens and a cow or two. Surplus was sold to friends and neighbors, giving the housewife "pin money" which helped buy an organ or some other luxury. Some women took in sewing or boarders or washings to add to the family income.

A lucky bride of that period was given a side-saddle riding horse as part of her trousseau so she could visit her friends for morning coffee now and then.

The town wife today manages the family income, keeps her eyes and ears open for any bit of information that may help her husband in his business. She plans meals around his activities and cordially receives the unexpected guests. She is working in shops and offices to make it possible for the family to have more of the things they want.

Since the dawn of the world, mothers have felt responsible for the education of their children. Details differ with income and environment but the goals are the same. The voices of mothers come down through the ages, saying, each in her own way, "My children must have a philosophy, a religion to live by. They must have the skills and social graces that will fit them for the work they will be doing."

Today, just as yesterday, all over the world, from jungle huts to mansions on the boulevard, mothers are dreaming and planning and scheming for the kind of education they feel is important for their children.

Family welfare has been the first consideration of women. But the clever woman has found time for some private life of her own, which may take the form of community work. Woman's rights, better educational facilities, better housing, dress reform — such problems have been tackled by women. Their interests and activities stretch into state, national and international affairs.

As time marches on, there will be more and more machines to replace the hand work women once did, probably more and more agencies to supplement or take over some of the educational and social responsibilities of homemakers.

But as long as there are men and children, women will be making homes for them to come home to at night, helping them do what they want to do, leading them in the way they think they should go, sharing their confidences, binding up their wounds of disappointment and rejoicing with them in their successes.

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